What is claimed is:

1. A method for measuring platelet function by the counting of platelets before and after exogenous platelet activation comprising:

(a) selecting first and second samples comprising platelets in a liquid medium from a physiological source of said platelets wherein each of said samples contains approximately the same number of platelets;

(b) obtaining a baseline count of the platelets contained in said first sample;

(c) mixing an amount of an activation agonist with said second sample for a period of time effective to maximally activate the activatable platelets in said second sample;

(d) obtaining a count of the unactivated platelets in said second sample after activation of the active platelets;

(e) utilizing the difference in the baseline count of platelets in step (b) from the count in step (d) as a measure of the activity of the platelets in the original sample.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the count of platelets is obtained in an electrical impedance cell counter.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the counting of the platelets in the first sample is conducted in the presence of EDTA as a blood preservative.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the second tube is essentially devoid of any agent which interferes with platelet function.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the platelet activation agent is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate, adenosine tri-phosphate, serotonin, thromboxane, collagen, epinephrine, thrombin, ristocetin or arachidonic acid.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the agonist is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the platelets are human platelets.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the second tube contains a blood preservative which does not interfere with platelet function to any significant degree.

9. A method for measuring platelet function by the counting of platelets before and after exogenous platelet activation comprising:

(a) providing a sample comprising platelets in a liquid medium from a physiological source of said platelets;

(b) obtaining a baseline count of the platelets contained in said sample;

(c) mixing an amount of an activation agonist with said sample for a period of time effective to maximally activate the activatable platelets in said sample;

(d) obtaining a count of the unactivated platelets in said sample after activation of the activated platelets;

(e) utilizing the difference in the baseline count of platelets in step (b) from the count obtained in step (d) as a measure of the platelet function in the original sample.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the count of platelets is obtained in an electrical impedance cell counter.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the tube is essentially devoid of any agent which interferes with platelet function.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the platelet activation agent is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate, adenosine tri-phosphate, serotonin, thromboxane, collagen, epinephrine, thrombin, ristocetin or arachidonic acid.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the agonist is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the platelets are human platelets.

15. The method of claim 11 wherein the second tube contains a blood preservative which does not interfere with platelet function to any significant degree.

16. A kit for use in obtaining platelet counts on platelet samples said kit comprising at least one tube comprising a platelet activation agonist in an amount effective to maximally activate activatable platelets likely to be added to said tube, and optionally a blood preservative which does not substantially interfere with platelet function.

17. The kit of claim 16 wherein the platelet activation agonist is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate, adenosine tri-phosphate, serotonin, thromboxane, collagen, epinephrine, thrombin, ristocetin or arachidonic acid.

18. The kit of claim 17 wherein said optional blood preservative is present.

19. The kit of claim 18 wherein the agonist is adenosine 5′ di-phosphate.

20. The kit of claim 18 wherein there are at least two tubes comprising a platelet activation agonist.